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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Estonia

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SUBJECT Town of Valga

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DATE OF IN

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SOURCE

1. Valga, Estonia, is a county seat in south central Estonia, located on the Estonia-Latvia border on the main line of the railroad running between Tartu and Riga, Latvia. Valga is a very old city having been officially established in 1584. The normal-gauge railroad was begun in 1889, the small gauge in 1896 and it is now important as a key rail center. There was no public transportation in the city itself with the exception of a few taxi cabs. The population in 1934 was 10,832, composed primarily of Estonians. One of the oldest landmarks is the classic style Lutheran Church on the corner of Kesk and Riia Streets, which was built about 1787. [redacted] heard that the southwest section of the city had been almost completely destroyed, but how true this is I do not know.

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2. I have located on a map [Available at the CIA Map Library] the principal landmarks of Valga, the numbers below corresponding to those on the map: \*

1. City Hall. Small, one-story, wooden building with perhaps 20-25 rooms. The roof went up to a point under which was a large clock and the painted wording "Valga City Hall". During the first Soviet occupation (June 1940-July 1941) the name was changed to "Executive Committee of City of Valga". The original wording was replaced upon the departure of the Soviets and the arrival of the Germans.
2. Lutheran Church. Although the doors remained open during the first Soviet occupation, people were afraid to attend services. It was used by the Communists for meetings and the grounds surrounding the church were used for storing hay and straw. Whether or not the interior was used for the same purpose I do not know.

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3. Custom House. This small wooden building was located on the border. The border consisted of a five-to six-foot ditch which could easily be crossed. During Estonian independence, one only needed his passport to cross into Latvia while during both the Soviet and German occupations no documents were necessary.
4. Estonian Bank. Large stone building, erected in 1930, which also contained a branch office of the Estonian County Bank (for farmers).
5. Cooperative Bank. Two-or possibly three-story stone building containing perhaps 20 rooms. During the German occupation (1942-1944) it was turned into an Army hospital.
6. "Sade" Theatre. This was a four-story stone building, the largest in Valga. There was an auditorium with a seating capacity of 500 on the ground floor. The floor was not sloped and was used for dances, meetings, etc. It had a well-equipped stage, dressing rooms, etc. The building also housed the Bank of Valga as well as the Police Headquarters. During the first Soviet occupation, the name was changed to "Valga Workers".
7. County Government Building. Built in 1938 or 1939 it was a one-story, plaster on brick building.
8. Valga Gymnasium. Built in 1940 or 1941 this was a three-story brick building which had the largest gymnasium in Valga and in addition had a rifle range in the basement.
9. Orthodox Church.
10. Army District Headquarters. Large, one-story wooden building, painted yellow. It also had a garage and a stable for horses.
11. Catholic Church.
12. Monument to Lt. Kuperjanov, hero of the Independence War. It had a marble base on top of which was a life-size statue of Kuperjanov. During the first Soviet occupation the statue was removed and horses were put to graze on the grass plot surrounding the monument. Available on loan from the CIA the numbers below corresponding
13. Post Office. A two-story stone or brick building, painted yellow. It also housed the telephone office and a library.
14. Home Guard Headquarters. Large building containing a drill hall.
15. Stadium.
16. Hospital. Large, two-story stone building with spacious grounds.
17. Railroad Station which also contained the telegraph office. Valga, as a key rail center, had the following lines running into it:

Valga-Tallinn (through Tartu) - normal gauge  
 Valga-Petseri (through Voru) - normal gauge  
 Valga-Rujana-Moisakula - small gauge  
 Valga-Riga (international route on into Germany) - normal gauge  
 Valga-Gubena - small gauge

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18. Home Economics School for girls, in which Soviet women in uniform <sup>Russian</sup> taught.
19. Two, one-story brick buildings for the railroad workers.
20. Brick Factory.
21. Factory where railroad ties were impregnated with coal tar.
22. Garden belonging to the Sade Theatre containing tables and benches and used as a picnic grounds.
23. Open air, city-owned firewood market.
24. Slaughter house. Two-story <sup>balcony</sup> stone building with a seating capacity <sup>auditorium with a seating capacity</sup> and a basement.
25. Priimetsa Cemetery (public).
26. Water tower for railroad, tallest structure in Valga.
27. Power station. Large, three-story brick building, with high chimney.
28. Market
29. Public swimming pool on Pedeli Creek (known as Konnaoja Creek by the people).
30. Orthodox Cemetery.
31. Rifle range for Home Guard.
32. "Valga Newspaper". One-story brick building. During the first Soviet occupation, the name of the paper was changed to "Valga Communist".
33. Apothecary.
34. Valga Trade School. Address: #6 Pulestee Street. One two-story brick building contained the shops (carpentry and mechanics) and the other two-story wooden building the classrooms.
35. "Rex" movie house.
36. Red Cross hotel.
37. Hotel. Two-story wooden building. During the German occupation a first aid station was maintained on the first floor.
38. Supply House and recreation rooms for the German Army.
39. Public School.
40. Elementary School.
41. Public Bath House.
42. Fire Department.
43. Two-story stone building, used first by the Germans (1941) as headquarters of Field Police and later by District Commissar (Gebietskomissar).

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44. Brewery, "A Le Coq". This was a branch of the main plant in Tallinn, where carbonated water and soft drinks were manufactured.
45. "Tam and Kiipssaar" privately owned transport firm. In addition to renting trucks I believe they also maintained the Valga taxi service.
46. Cafe.
47. Men's tailor shop.
48. Men's Barber shop.
49. Lepik Department store, named for the owner. This was a four-story building slightly smaller than the "Sade" Theatre.
50. Cemetery
51. Railroad repair station.
52. City and County Motor Vehicle Department, including garage for repair of government vehicles as well as privately-owned automobiles.

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German Army.

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